



SUPPORT THE \$1 PER PACK CIGARETTE TAX INCREASE.

December 22, 2006

Matt Myers
Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
1707 L Street NW Suit 800
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr .Myers

On the morning of December 13, 2006, Patrick Reynolds served as the keynote speaker during the Communities or a Clean Bill of Health (CCBH) "Save Lives. Save Money" community forum in Jackson, MS. The purpose of the forum was to educate healthcare providers, policy makers, consumers and advocates on the benefits of increasing the cigarette tax by \$1.00 in Mississippi. Mr. Reynolds contributions to the event were invaluable. He presented himself as an ambassador for the cigarette tax increase in Mississippi and I believe he would serve as a successful advocate across the country.

Mr. Reynolds participated in a conference call with members of CCBH, Prior to the arriving in Jackson. During the call he made several suggestions to possible approaches when dealing with the media and was open to comments from members of CCBH on how best to deal with state issues.

Throughout his visit and prior to, Mr. Reynolds was a joy to work with. He was always professional, open-minded, non partisan and well prepared. While speaking at the forum, he had command of the audience while presenting his personal story on how he became one of the nation's preeminent anti-tobacco advocates. He also spoke effectively about the positive effects of raising the cigarette tax in Mississippi. When Mr. Reynolds spoke to the media, he cited statistics with passion and in a persuasive voice. He was able to cite studies showing the affects increasing the cigarette tax would have on health costs and revenue in our state.

The combination of our news release and the appearance of Mr. Reynolds was a great story for the media in Jackson. Our forum was attended by the local television affiliates of NBC and ABC; the states largest newspaper, the Clarion-Ledger; Mississippi Public Broadcasting and the story was picked up by the Associated Press and other media throughout the state and Memphis, TN.

It was an honor to work with such a dedicated advocate on the issue such as Mr. Reynolds. I would enthusiastically recommend him as a principle speaker for forums or press events in support anti-tobacco efforts in other states.

Sincerely,

Roy Mitchell
Mississippi Health Advocacy Program
Steering Committee Member, Communities for a Clean Bill of Health